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SENSATIONAL STORIES

Some "sensational stories" have been told about the so-called "austerity taxes" which were imposed to supplement the Canadian Government's program of bans or restrictions to conserve U.S. dollars, including alleged grumblings of Liberal backbenchers against these policies, rumors that the Government has decided to throw overboard these taxes because they were proving unpopular, and others of a kind to make headlines. However, veteran observers backstage in this capital are not impressed with these sensational stories because they know that the taxes like all taxes, are not popular of course, but not such different than the fiscal devices used during the war in emergency. In this case the shortage of U.S. funds was the emergency and these taxes aimed to limit purchases of certain goods that directly or indirectly caused expenditure for steel and other imported parts or materials.

In simple everyday language, if the taxes did not accomplish this objective, they would be lifted or changed and in every event they were only temporary measures. Consequently there has been a tendency here among observers to "tone down" the sensational implications of stories pertaining to the lifting of these taxes. Indeed, the Government's activities to keep down the cost-of-living index have deserved more headlines than these "sensational stories" about alleged tax grumblings.

ACTION OF PARLIAMENT

"It would require action by the Canadian Parliament," said External Affairs Minister St. Laurent in the House of Commons replying to a question if it would require legislation by Parliament for possible union of Newfoundland and Canada to be consummated. "I do not think this Government or any other Government would venture to consummate a thing of such magnitude without having it decided by the Parliament of Canada."

Mr. St. Laurent also made it clear that the degree to which the consent of the population of Newfoundland would require to be expressed would have to be appraised by those who are responsible for Newfoundland affairs. "If the government of Newfoundland having consulted the population, represented to us that the population wished confederation to be consummated I think we would not go behind that declaration to examine to what extent they were justified in making such a representation," Mr. St. Laurent declared.

"I hope there will be a clearcut decision in this second vote," he said. "I have hope it will not be so close as to leave us in the embarrassing position of having to take in a large group of recalcitrants or having to renounce the opportunity of completing what the Fathers of Confederation originally intended."

OUR ATOMIC AGE

In these days of political controversies, talk of war etc., it is pleasant to report from Parliament Hill something of an entirely different nature which may prove to be of great benefit to mankind, though no proper publicity was given to it.

"I could hold in my hand a small cylinder of natural metallic uranium," said Trade Minister Howe in Parliament. "The cylinder I had prepared for this demonstration was about the size of the little jack-knife I now hold in my hand. We now know that if every bit of this very heavy metal could be turned into energy which theoretically it can be we could get the same quantity of power that could be developed by about 500,000 tons of coal or about the power we now get out of the large Shipshaw plant in one year."

"There is little doubt that some day we shall be able to fly to remote areas in one small aeroplane, more potential power in the form of nuclear fuel than can be hauled today in a hundred railway coal cars," Mr. Howe emphasized. "One does not require an extraordinary imagination to envisage what that may mean to future developments."

Mr. Howe told Parliament that commercial atomic power is definitely not "just around the corner." But there are immediate dividends in connection with radio active isotopes and their use in medicine, biological research and industrial applications.

"In the treatment of disease," he stressed significantly "There is a future so hopeful that many believe the benefits from medical research alone will some day repay manifold all our considerable expenditures."

SAID IN THE CAPITAL

"I am not proposing any change in capital punishment at this time," Justice Minister Halsey told the House of Commons commenting upon Britain's decision to make the death penalty applicable only to certain types of murder.

"We must give more to maintain our way of living," stressed G. Russell Boucher, MP in an address here urging that "we must fortify ourselves to fight Communism" in Canada.

"We must and will take cognizance of the fact that no place on the globe is no more than 60 hours distant from any other spot and Canada is no longer a country of isolation," said Health and Welfare Minister Paul Martin.

"Don't forget the newspapers" admonished Harry Binks to a large convention of Rotarians in this capital. "In your town they have a big influence. You should see to it that there are reporters at every meeting."

"The results indicate that imports from soft currency countries (Britain for example) have not been adversely affected by the emergency exchange conservation measures" declared Finance Minister Abbott here in reporting satisfactory progress in saving U.S. dollars by the Canadian Government's bans on imports.

"Such a proposed constitutional amendment would abolish the sovereignty of parliament in Canada," stated Senator L.M. Gouin in reference to suggestion of a change in the British North America Act to include a new "civil rights" section as proposed by the Canadian Committee for a Bill of Rights.

The man who is satisfied with but little here below often winds up with twice as less.

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